

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

pass, through the period of industrial capitalism, and consequently have no industrial proletariat, and as a result will have to pass from primitive forms of economy to the stage of Soviet economy without passing through the stage of industrial capitalism. In order to effect this difficult *but by no means impossible operation*, we must take into account all the peculiarities of economic life and even the history, social life and culture of these peoples.²

This theme of caution as a concomitant to revolutionary action in the East frequently reappeared in Stalin's writings and speeches. Having warned the comrades on one occasion against "mechanical transplantation of the economic measures of Central Russia," on another he severely admonished them against ill-conceived haste in converting the conquered border regions into Communism. With truly Marxist approach he said:

If, for instance, the Daghestani masses, who are profoundly imbued with religious prejudices, follow the Communists on the basis of the Shariat, it is obvious that the direct method of combating religious prejudices in this country must be replaced by indirect and more cautious methods. . . .

In brief, cavalry raids with the object of "immediately communizing" the backward masses of the people must be discarded for a cautious and well conceived policy of gradually drawing these masses in to the general stream of Soviet development.³

Combining the basic principle with necessary caution, Moscow devised the following stratagem: A backward area that had undergone a revolution would obtain a new political structure based on the institution of the Soviet and of the Communist party's monopoly of power. Economically, however, such an area, while skipping the capitalist phase, would not immediately become socialist. Instead, it

would pass through a transitional period during which stress would be laid on the development of industry by the state and on the promotion of co-operatives. Industry would create an industrial prole-

2 *Marxism and the National Question, Selected Writings and Speeches* (New York, 1942)' p- 104. Italics mine. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, International Publishers. This book is a modified edition of *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* (Marxist Library, Works of Marxism Leninism, vol. XXXVIII) published in the thirties by International Publishers, undated. The latter contains interesting chapters such as "The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East," which are omitted in the revised edition.

s *Ibid.*, p. 85.